

## Message Text

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73

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 SAJ-01 /079 W

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R 281705Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5991

SECDEF

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MPOL, UK

SUBJ: DEFENSE AND THE LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE

1. AT THE ANNUAL LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE, WHICH OPENED 27 SEPTEMBER, THE DEBATE ON DEFENSE IS SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 1, BUT IT MAY NOT BE HELD. IF IT IS, WE EXPECT THE USUAL FIREWORKS FROM THE LABOR LEFT WHO ARE EXTREMELY UNHAPPY WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S "TOO HIGH SPENDING" ON DEFENSE. THE LEFT-WING CAN BE EXPECTED TO MAKE A MAJOR ATTACK ON DEFENSE POLICY AIMED AT SEEKING SUBSTANTIAL FURTHER REDUCTIONS IN DEFENSE SPENDING. HOWEVER, AFTER THE ANTICIPATED EMOTIONAL AND IDEOLOGICAL BOMBAST HAS RUN ITS COURSE AND THE DUST SETTLES, WE EXPECT THAT IF A VOTE COMES IT IS LIKELY TO BE ON A WATERED DOWN COMPOSITE RESOLUTION WHICH WILL HAVE LITTLE IF ANY EFFECT ON THE GOVERNMENT.

2. FRED MULLEY, THE NEW DEFENSE SECRETARY -- AND A MEMBER OF THE LABOR PARTY NATIONAL EXECUTIVE -- HAS BEEN BARRED FROM REPLYING TO THE CONFERENCE DEBATE ON DEFENSE. RON HAYWARD, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE PARTY, HAS TAKEN THE POSITION THAT MULLEY CANNOT REPLY ON BEHALF OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BECAUSE THEIR VIEWS ABOUT THE NEED FOR

FURTHER SUBSTANTIAL DEFENSE CUTS CONFLICT WITH THE GOVERN-  
MENT'S POLICIES -- AS WELL AS WITH MULLEY'S VIEWS AS  
DEFENSE SECRETARY. HAYWARD, IN A CALCULATED SNUB THAT  
UNDERScores THE WIDE GULF BETWEEN THE LEFT-DOMINATED  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE AND THE GOVERNMENT, TOOK THE LINE  
THAT THE CONFERENCE IS MEANT TO BE A PLATFORM FOR THE  
PARTY AND NOT FOR THE GOVERNMENT, AND HENCE MULLEY COULD  
NOT PUT FORWARD ADEQUATELY THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE'S CASE  
FOR MORE DEFENSE CUTS AS HE IS NOW THE DEFENSE SECRETARY.  
MULLEY, A FORMER PARTY CHAIRMAN AND A RIGHT-WINGER, IS  
REPORTED TO BE HIGHLY IRRITATED BY THIS SNUB.  
ARMSTRONG

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MEETING AGENDA, GOVERNMENT BUDGET, MILITARY EXPENDITURES, UNION GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, LABOR UNIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 28 SEP 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ElyME  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976LONDON15460  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760366-0452  
**From:** LONDON  
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**Image Path:**  
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**Line Count:** 73  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ElyME  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 05 APR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <05 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <11 AUG 2004 by ElyME>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** DEFENSE AND THE LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE  
**TAGS:** MPOL, ELAB, UK  
**To:** STATE DOD  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006